(c) The BPL Census 1997 was conduced based on consumption expenditure as one of the main parameters and adopted Rs. 20,000/- per annum per household as limit for exclusion of a family from the BPL Census 2002 was conducted using the methodology of Score Based Ranking of rural household for which 13 socio-economic parameters such as size of land holding, type of houses, food security, sanitation, ownership of consumer durables, literacy, means of livelihood, etc. were prescribed by the Expert Group constituted by the Ministry.

(d) No, Sir.

Proposals from Maharashtra

1433. SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals pending for approval in his Ministry from the State of Maharashtra till date and since when they have been pending;

(b) the details of the pending proposals and the reasons of delay in their approval;

(c) whether Government would issue any guideline to settle the proposals; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) There is no proposal from Government of Maharashtra lying pending for approval.

(b) to (d) does not arise.

Strategy to protect common man

1434. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any special plan and strategy to save industries, employments, maintain growth rate, increase per capita income and protect the increase of Aam Admi in view of global economy slow down, downtrend growth and employment, closure and merger of industries and industrial houses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) Yes, Sir. With a view to counter the negative fallout of the global slowdown on the Indian economy, Government responded by providing three focused fiscal stimulus packages in the form of tax relief and increased expenditure on public projects along with Reserve Bank of India taking a number of monetary easing and liquidity enhancing measures.

Genetically modified crops

1435. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what measures Government is taking or proposing to take to ensure that Genetically Modified Crops do not become a health hazard to the public; and

(b) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) The regulatory mechanism for biosafety and field trials of genetically modified (GM) crops in the country fall within the purview of Rules-1989 of the Environment (Protection) Act-1986. The details of these rules and the Act are available on the website of the Ministry of Environment and Forests *i.e. www.envfor.nic.in*. To assess the impact of GM foods on the public health, the procedure followed globally is to ensure substantial equivalence of GM food to its non-GM counterpart before its release. As far as impact on the environment is concerned, it is addressed and assessed during the field trials. Issue of allowing cultivation of GM crops depends on the biosafety aspects of the GM crops. All GM crops are subject to toxicity and allergenicity evaluation systematically to assess any health risk posed by GM crops as per approved protocols for food and feed safety assessment of GE crops, 2008 and no crop would be allowed for commercial cultivation if it poses any risk to the environment, to human and animal health. Testing of GM seeds is an elaborate science-based process and involves several experts, Institutions, Universities and Government Departments. Various tests are carried out for ensuring food and environmental safety as per the stringent Guidelines-1989 under EPA 1986 available for public use at *http://dbtbiosafety.nic.in* and *http://www.igmoris.nic.in*. Further, the testing of GM seeds is a continuous and multistep process carried out at specific and approved locations throughout the country in collaboration with Institutions and Universities as per Revised *Guidelines and Standards Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Confined Field Trials of Regulated, Genetically Engineered (GE) Plants* 2008. Result of the tests are evaluated by Expert Committees like Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) and Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) constituted by the Government. After ensuring the above facts, Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) recommends to Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) for commercial cultivation of GM crops. While giving permission for conducting field trials on the GM crops, it is ensured that all the conditions and Standard Operating Procedures are strictly complied by the permitted party.

State Science and Technology Programme

1436. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the achievement made under 'State Science and Technology Programme' in each State particularly, in Himachal Pradesh during the last three years;

(b) location-wise details of hospital waste disposal systems, water purification systems, decentralized energy generation systems and surface engineering systems set up under the programme in Himachal Pradesh during the last three years; and

(c) the funds allocated by Government for the purpose during the said period, State-wise, including Himachal Pradesh, year-wise?